Jaina Historical Studies

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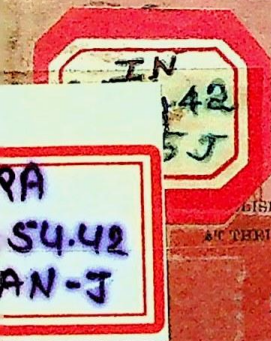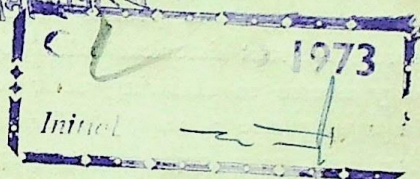
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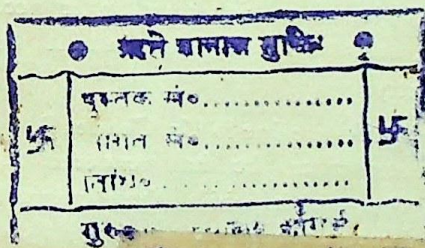
TO THE LOVING MEMORY OF

VILAM KANWAR.

PREFACE.

This little book has been written with a view to giving the reader an idea of the splendid role played by the Jainas in the history of the Rajput states. Almost all the families of note in Rajputana possess ancient family records of great historical value, but they are very averse to allowing their inspection or imparting the necessary information. This fact will, to a certain extent, account for the sketchy character of the essays published in the following pages.

I earnestly hope that some competent scholar will take up the inquiry of this hitherto neglected branch of the Jaina History and give us a richer and fuller account of the exploits of our brethren in that part of the country.

My thanks are due to Mr. Charles B. Swain for the assistance he has rendered me in reading the proofs while these pages were passing through the press.

DELHI,
Maliwara St.
Feb. 1914.

UMRAO SINGH TANK.

CONTENTS.

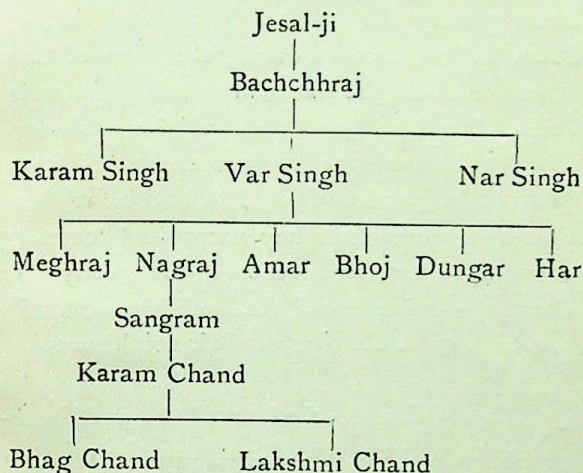
The Rise and Fall of the Bachchhavats.

WHILE on a short visit to Bikaner on the occasion of the Jubilee celebrated by Maharaja Ganga Singhji, I was shown among other places of interest, a Jaina *Upasara*, situate in the Rangri-ka-chowk. It is an ancient looking building with a large open space in front of it, and is said to have once formed part of the palatial residence of the Bachchhavat family. My good guide related to me a pathetic story of the rise and fall of the Bachchhavats as we went round the place. A feeling of awe and reverence came over me as he described in glowing terms the last tragic scene of the drama of the Bachchhavat clan, which was enacted some three centuries ago on the very spot where we then found ourselves standing. The Bachchhavats had doubtless a glorious rise and a still more glorious fall, and every son of the Jaina mother may justly be proud of it.

Bachchharaj, after whom the family is called Bachchhavat, was the real founder of the Bachchhavat greatness. He sprang from the noble stock of the Bothras of Marwar in whose

veins flowed the heroic blood of the warlike Chohan prince Samant Singh, the king of Jalore. He entered the service of Rao Ridhmal, chief of Mandore, where his tact and good fortune helped him to the position of "*diwan.*" When Ridhmal was slain by the treacherous hand of Rana Kumbha, Bachchharaj invited Jodha to Mandore and proclaimed him king. Later on, Bika, son of Jodha, in his ambition to carve out a new kingdom for himself set out northward from Mandore. Bachchhraj attached himself to the adventurous prince and accompanied him in his quest for a kingdom. His step was one in the right direction. It marked the beginning of a bright and prosperous era in the history of the Bachchhavat family. Fortune favoured Bika and crowned his efforts with success. Having secured possession of a tract of land belonging to the Sanklas of Janglu, he carried his arms westward and conquered Bhagore from the Bhatties. Here he founded his capital, Bikaner, in A.D. 1488, thirty years after his departure from the parental roof at Mandore and settled in his new environments as an independent monarch. Bachchhraj also settled down with his family in the new city. Following the example of his master, he founded a village which he called after his name Bachchhasar. Bachchhraj was a man of great piety and love, and did

much to further the glory of the Jaina religion. He made pilgrimage to Mount Shatrunjaya and died full of years and honours.

Through the kind and generous offices of my guide I have been able to give the following geneology of the Bachchhavat family.

As time rolled on, the Bachchhavats gained more and more in power and stability and influence. They remained chief advisers and friends of all the successive chiefs from Bika downwards until their overthrow during the reign of Rai Singh. The post of the *diwan* became hereditary in the family. They produced men of

great experience and wide culture who not only controlled the civil affairs of the state with great skill and tact but also took part in military transactions. In fact they handled the sword as well as the pen. Var Singh and Nagraj were their great warriors. The former lost his life in an engagement with Haji Khan Lodi, while the latter greatly distinguished himself in putting down an insurrection during the reign of Lun Karan. Nor did the Bachchhavats lag behind in deeds of public good and religious charity. They celebrated the enthronements of Jaina pontiffs, led parties of pilgrims, and built grand places of worship. They patronised learning, encouraged art, and relieved the needy. In short, the existence of the Bachchhavat family proved a great blessing to their neighbours.

Karam Chand, the last of the great Bachchhavats, was the son of Sangram, the minister of Rao Kalyan Singh.

When Rai Singh came to *gaddi* in A. D 1573 he appointed Karam Chand as his *diwan*. Karam Chand was a man of great erudition. and wide culture. He possessed a strong common sense, and was a prudent statesman and wise administrator

Rai Singh had not been long on the throne when Abhaya Singh, Raja of Jeypore, invaded Bikaner. The times were out of joint and the state was not prepared to run the risk of a disastrous and dubious war. In his perplexity, the Raja held a conference with the minister who, with his characteristic quickness of decision and clearness of brain, advised the prince to make peace with the invader. Rai Singh did as he had been advised to do by his minister. The wisdom of Karam Chand saved the situation and Bikaner continued to enjoy peace and prosperity.

Rai Singh was an impetuous, headlong and credulous man. His worst fault was an utter disregard for consequences. He was generous to a fault, to speak the best of him. He dissipated the fortune of his forefathers in a most reckless manner. He wasted his revenues in building new forts and fortresses. He threw away his money to the *bhats* and the *charans*. It is said that once a *bhat* named Shankar composed some *verses* in his praise and recited them to him on the occasion of his return from Delhi. He felt so highly humoured that, in a fit of generosity, he ordered his minister to confer upon the panagyrist a *Khilat* and a reward of one crore of rupees. The announcement

staggered the minister. He hesitated and remonstrated with the prince and lo! the prince raised the amount of reward to one crore and twenty-five lacs. One crore of rupees, goes the story, was at once paid and for the balance the revenue of the state was pledged The story may not be true to the letter, but its value lies in the fact that it throws a flood of light on the court life of those days It acquaints us with the circumstances under which Karam Chand lived. It at least points out the direction in which we should look for the causes which brought about friction between the prince and his minister and ultimately the downfall of the latter. Rai Singh every day grew more and more extravagant. The treasury stood in danger of running dry. The finances fell into disorder. The future appeared gloomy. At last Karam Chand, actuated by his love and devotion to the house of Bika, made a last and determined effort to bring the prodigal prince to his senses. But the result proved most disastrous to himself. It has been alleged that in A. D. 1595 Rai Singh learnt that Karam Chand had formed a conspiracy with the object of supplanting him either by Dalpat Singh or by Ram Singh. It has been further asserted that Karam Chand thereby wanted to make himself all-powerful in the state. We may mention

here once for all that we are not prepared to give credence to these allegations which are neither supported by evidence nor seem probable under the circumstances. We fail to perceive any motive in Karam Chand for this alleged act of treason against his master. Even those who lay this charge at his door are not agreed among themselves as to the name of the person in whose favour the alleged conspiracy was formed; *viz.*, whether it was Dalpat Singh or Ram Singh. Besides, the fact that Akbar, who was on the most friendly terms with Rai Singh and was also connected with him through the marriage of his son, extended a hearty, open and ready welcome to Karam Chand when he fled to Delhi, strongly militates against the theory that he had any hand in the crime imputed to him. We all know how inveterate Rai Singh had been in his enmity towards him and presumably he must have done his best to undermine the position and damage the status of Karam Chand at the court of the Emperor. He might have gone so far as to ask the Emperor to hand over Karam Chand to him or at least to turn him out That Akbar, whose love for justice and fair dealing had been unimpeachable, never doubted even for a moment the innocence of the minister is a complete answer to all the charges so maliciously levelled

against him. Akbar treated him with great honour and consideration. It may be asked if Karam Chand had really a clear conscience, why did he run away from Bikaner. Those who have carefully studied the history of Rajasthan and have before their mind's eye the fates of men like Indraj Singhvi and Amar Chand Surana will at once agree with us that this step of his was one in the right direction. Unfortunably in those days there was neither a strong and independent judiciary nor a fair chance of justice for those who had the misfortune of being accused of high treason against their prince. It is only under the *aegis* of the British Rule that the blessings of impartial justice and personal security guaranteed by fixed and definite laws and guarded by a strong and independent judiciary have been secured to the people, as a whole, in India. To be brief, we believe that Karam Chand was quite innocent of the charge which had been brought against him. He fell a martyr in a right and just cause. He was not the author of any conspiracy but was rather the victim of it. His own high sense of duty with which he approached the task of administration proved the cause of his ruin. He was determined to bring the prince back to the right path and he worked for the realisation of this object with an unflinching faith and

untiring zeal which always guide those who believe themselves engaged in a just and righteous cause. In so doing, he incurred the enmity of those whose interest lay in seeing the prince persist in his old course of extravagance and dissipation. To proceed, his enemies got the upper hand in the court and poisoned the ears of the Raja against him by inventing a false story of an imaginary plot. The credulous prince—and we know that he was so on the authority of no less a person than Jahangir himself—believed implicitly in all the nonsense which the enemies of Karam Chand had been pleased to tell him. He at once determined to arrest Karam Chand and to put him to death. The friends of the minister had already reported to him all that had been talked of or said about him in the court. As soon as he learnt the decision of the prince, he fled from Bikaner and invoked the protection of Akbar which was generously given. The Emperor treated the noble refugee with every courtesy and kindness and conferred on him a position of honour in the court. Karam Chand rose higher and higher every day in the esteem of Akbar, and soon acquired great influence over him.

When Rai Singh learnt that Karam Chand had escaped to Delhi, he swore indignantly and vowed vengeance on him: and we shall

see later on how keenly he felt his discomfiture and frustration.

While Karam Chand was a refugee at Delhi, a curious incident occurred at Bhatner which gave him an opportunity of avenging himself on Rai Singh. It is not, however, certain whether or not he took advantage of it. In A. D. 1597, while Rai Singh was staying at Bhatner, a place in his territory, Nasir-Khan, father-in-law of the Emperor, happened to come there. The Raja appointed Teja Bagor to look after the comfort of his illustrious guest. Teja entertained his guest in a manner which was quite unique and novel. While the Khan was taking a stroll, Teja pretended to be mad and belaboured him with shoes. The Khan hastened to Delhi and complained of this outrage to Akbar. The Emperor called upon the Raja to surrender the offender to him, but the latter blankly disobeyed. This enraged the Emperor who dispossessed Rai Singh of his *jagir* of Bhatner and instead conferred it on his (Rai's) son Dalpat Singh. We do not know for certain whether Karam Chand actually espoused the cause of the aggrieved Khan at the court, but all the same Rai Singh believed that he had done so: an impression which tended to intensify still deeper the already existing bitterness between the Raja and his late minister.

The services which Karam Chand rendered to his community and religion can never be overrated. He is still remembered as a great benefactor of the *Sangha* In A. D. 1555, he celebrated the official entry of Jinachandra Suri a pontiff of the Kharatar gachchha at Bikaner with great *eclat.* The *Kavi* who brought him the glad tidings of the advent of the high-priest received a handsome reward from him. His charity was boundless and considering the crusade he led against the *bai-bhats* we may add that it never extended to the idlers. While at Delhi, he took advantage of the tolerant spirit of Akbar and created in him a taste for Jain scriptures and religion. Under his advice, Akbar invited Hiravijaya Suri and Jinachandra Suri, the most learned jainas of the age to his court, and kept them in his society. Among the noted Jainas, at the court of Akbar, the name of Todarmal, his financial minister, stands most prominent. Todarmal belonged to the Lodha sept of the Oswals and his descendants known as Todarmalhot are still found at Ajmer and Jodhpur. Theroshah Bhansali was another noted Jaina in the court of Akbar, and is said to have built a temple at Agra. In A.D. 1592 Karam Chand celebrated the enthronement of Jinasinha Suri at Lahore with befitting pomp. He recovered a large

number of Jaina images from the Mohamedans into whose hands they had fallen, and enshrined them at the Chief Temple at Bikaner. He secured the Jainas various rights, privileges and concessions from the Emperor. He introduced many useful and needed reforms among the Oswals.

Akbar died in A. D. 1605, and Karam Chand did not long survive him. When Rai Singh visited Delhi to pay his homage to the new Emperor, Karam Chand lay dying in his house. Rai Singh visited the minister and apparently showed great sympathy and commisseration towards the dying man. Bhag Chand and Lakshmi Chand, sons of Karam Chand, were completely taken in by his sympathetic professions and said to their father. "See, father, how kind and sympathetic His Highness is." The dying man cast an angry glance at his sons and in faltering accents admonished them thus "Raw lads as you are, take care lest you should be deceived by his false tears and consent to go back to Bikaner. The Raja is rather sorry to see me die in glory." With these words of advice and warning the great man passed away. The Raja was profuse in his expression of sorrow and sympathy for the bereaved family and employed

every art in persuading the brothers to accompany him to Bikaner, but all to no purpose.

Rai Singh felt greatly annoyed at the failure of his fiendish design and still cherished a hope to have his revenge one day. In A. D. 1611 he became seriously ill and his malady took a fatal turn. When he felt his end draw nigh, he called his son Sur Singh to his bed side and admonished him thus " My son, I die disappointed. My last instruction to you is that you would bring back the sons of Karam Chand Bachchhavat to Bikaner and punish them for the sins of their father." With these words, the Raja expired.

Rai Singh was succeeded by Dalpat Singh who ruled for about two years. In A. D. 1613 Sur Singh became Raja. He had, however, not forgotten the last wishes of his dying father, but was only waiting for a proper opportunity to discharge his treacherous trust. As soon as he had celebrated his coronation, he hastened to Delhi. His object in going to Delhi was two-fold. Firstly, to do homage to the Emperor, and secondly, to bring back the Bachchhavat family to Bikaner. He completely succeeded in his intention. He met Bhagchand and Lakshmichand there and under most solemn promises and assurances secured their consent to accompany him to Bikaner

Decoyed with a fallacious guarantee of personal immunity and allured with the false prospects of the restoration of their old rights, the Bachchhavat brothers and their family started on their journey to their native place. They rejoiced over the idea that their days of banishment had come to an end and that they would soon be among their own people and in their own land. Their hearts were surcharged with feelings of gratitude and thankfulness towards their supposed benefactor. The ill-fated youths hardly dreamt that all the promises had been made only to be broken, and they were being led to their doom. Sur Singh took more than ordinary care in concealing his deep-laid plot. He dismissed his *diwan* and proclaimed to the world that he was going to restore ths post to its rightful claimants. In course of time, they reached Bikaner and were apparently treated with great courtesy and consideration by the Raja. In fact they had been lulled into fatal security. They had not been there full two months when one morning to their utter amazement they found that their houses had been besieged by three thousand soldiers of Sur Singh. They instinctively realised the situation. They preferred a glorious death to an ignominious surrender. The small band of their Rajput

servants who numbered only 500 rallied round their masters and girt up their loins to defend them. Every one had the courage and endurance to suffer or to die. The Bachchhavats and their followers fought like heroes, but it was not a contest in the strict sense of the word. It was a mere act of butchery—and that too of the most revolting type on the part of the besiegers. When all hope of salvation had gone, the brave brothers, true to their oswal birth, resolved to signalise the end of their family. In their despair they resorted to the awful but ancient *custom of johar*. The fatal pyre was lit up. All men and women took leave of each other. The ladies and children, the aged and the infirm all surrendered their lives—some by sword, others in the leaping flames of fire. Blood flowed out in torrents as the fumes of smoke curled their course upward. Not one feared to die Every thing valuable was destroyed and thrown into the well. This done, the brothers paid their respectful homage to the *Arhats*, put on saffron *pags* and embraced each other for the last time. They then threw open the gates of the *haveli* and rushed out sword-in-hand. They fought bravely but were overpowered and cut to pieces. Their houses were pulled down and razed to the ground. The Raja made every endeavour to exterminate

the Bachchhavat clan but providence had decreed otherwise. A Bachchhavat lady had a miraculous escape from this general massacre. She had gone to her father's place at Kishengarh to take her confinement there. A male child was born to her, and thus the Bachchhavat clan has been preserved.

The Bhandaris of Jodhpur.

The Bhandaris belong to the official (Mutsadi) section of the Oswal Community and occupy an eminent position in Marwar Society. At Jodhpur they, at present, number about 300 families.

The Bhandaris trace their descent from the Chohan family of Ajmer. Their ancestor Rao Lakshman (Lakhansi) separated himself from the Ajmer House and became the founder of an independent line of rulers at Nadole. The last known chief of this dynasty was Alhanadeva who in A. D. 1162 made a generous endowment towards the maintenance of a Jaina temple at Nadole. (*vide* J. B. R. A. S. XIX, 34.) Lakha was doubtless a great man. He was a man of great heroic courage and patriotic zeal. He "collected transit dues from the further gate of Anhulwara and levied tribute from the prince of Chitore." A visitor is still shown a fortress at Nadole which the tradition attributes to this celebrated prince.

Lakha had twenty-four sons, including one Dadrao who became the founder of the Bhandari family. It is said that Dadrao was entrusted with the charge of the Bhandar (store

house) and consequently his descendants came to be known as the Bhandaris. In Vik. Samvat 1149=A. D. 992. Yasobhadra Suri brought Dadrao to Jainism and incorporated his family into the Oswal Community.

The settlements of the Bhandaris in Marwar date from the time of Rao Jodha (A.D. 1427-89) whom the Bhandaris rendered splendid services. Under their leader, Nara Bhandari, they fought for Jodha against the Mewar forces at Jhilwara, and defeated them. Ever since their advent into Jodhpur, the Bhandaris have been influential at court and have filled in various positions of trust and responsibility in the state. Like the Singhvis, they have handled the sword as well as the pen. They have always been loyal and devoted to the House of Jodha and are still counted among the most valued servants of the state. Amongst the Bhandaris of historical fame, I may mention the names of Rughnath Khimsi, Vijay, Ratan Chand, Ganga Ram, Lakshmi Chand, Bahadar Mal and Kishanmal.

Rughnath :—He lived during the reign of Maharaja Ajit Singh (A.D. 1680-1725) who "committed the administration of all civil affairs to the faithful Raghonath Bindari with

the title of *diwan.* He was well qualified both from his experience in civil affairs and from his valour as a soldier." "Bhandari Rughnath," says Colonel Walter, "ruled Marwar in his master's name for a number of years, during the time that Maharaja Ajit Singh was at Delhi." This fact is well borne out by the popular couplet :—

"*Aje Dili ro patsho*

Raja tau Rughnath"

While Ajitsingh was the king of Delhi.

Rughnath was the Raja of Marwar.

Bhandari Khimsi :—He held the post of *diwan* under Maharaja Ajitsingh. He secured him the *sanad* of the Viceroyalty of Gujrat from the Emperor of Delhi. The annals of Marwar give him credit of having got the *jazia* (the poll-tax) repealed, which had been re-imposed by Aurangzeb on his infidel subjects.

Bhandari Vijay :—He was appointed as Governor of Patan by Maharaja Ajitsingh.

Ratan Chand :—He was a great general of Maharaja Abhay Singh (A. D. 1725-1750). When Abhay Singh invaded Bikaner, Ratan Chand was in command of the Marwar forces.

He greatly distinguished himself at the siege but was cut down while effecting a retreat.

Ganga Ram :—He flourished during the reign of Vijay Singh (A.D. 1752-92) and was both a statesman and soldier. He was present at the Battle of Mairta which was fought between the Mahrattas and the Rathores in A.D. 1790.

Lakshmichand :—He was *diwan* for a number of years during the reign of Maharaja Man Singh (A. D. 1803-43) and held a village worth Rs. 2,000 as *jagir*.

Bahadar Mal :—He lived during the time of Maharaja Takht Singh (A.D. 1843-73). He was probably the last representative of the Great Mutsadis of the old school. So great was his influence over the chief that the people came to regard him as *de facto* ruler of the Marwar—a fact which gave currency to the saying "*Bahare nache Bhadryo.*" It may be said to his credit however that he always exercised his vast influence in the interest of the state and its people whom he so greatly loved. His services in connection with the salt lease affair will long be remembered gratefully by the people of the Marwar. He died in A.D. 1885 at the age of seventy.

Kishan Mal :—He was treasury officer during the early part of the reign of Maharaja Sardar Singh, and also during that of his predecessor. He was a great financier and did his best to put the Marwar finances on sounder and firmer basis. The following popular quartet testifies to the esteem in which he was held by the people of Marwar :—

Baka phatat berian
Haka jashra hoe
Sut Bahadar re sire
Kishna jesa na koe.

The manners and customs of the Bhandaris are the same as those of other Oswals The temple of their tutelary goddess, Asapura, is at Nadole where a fair is held twice a year. It is said that Lakha having had no son to succeed him appealed to the goddess in his anxiety to have one. The goddess, pleased with his devotions, blessed him with twenty-four sons. The Bhandaris would not buy a black cow, a black goat, or a black buffalo though they would not, perhaps, hesitate to take it as a present.

The Bhandaris generally prefer state service to trade. They have their own sub-divisions, such as Dipavat, Monavat Lunavat, Nivavat which do not intermarry among themselves. The Bhandari ladies observe strict parda-system and unlike other oswals do not use the head ornament called the Bor.

Amar Chand Surana of Bikaner.

Amar Chand came of a respectable Oswal family of Bikaner and rose into distinction during the reign of Maharaja Surat Singh which extended from A.D. 1787 to A.D. 1828.

In A.D. 1805 (S. 1861) he was sent on an expedition against Zabta Khan, the Khan of Bhattis, whom he attacked and invested in his capital Bhatner. After having held out for some five months, Zabta Khan surrendered the fort and was allowed to retire with his followers to Rhena. In recognition of his services, Amar Chand was made *diwan* of the state.

In A.D. 1808 (S. 1865) Maharaja Man Singh of Jodhpur invaded Bikaner. An army composed of his feudal levies under the command of Indraj Singhvi with a brigade of Amir Khan, the scourge of Rajputana, was marched against the ill-fated state. Surat Singh also collected a large force and, having put Amar Chand at its head, despatched it to check the progress of the invaders. The opposing armies met at Bapri. After a short but sharp skirmish, which cost him the lives of two hundred

soldiers, Amar Chand retreated back towards the capital followed by the victorious Indraj (1). At last a treaty was concluded between the two states at Gajner which brought the hostilities to an end.

During the reign of Surat Singh, the Thakurs of Bikaner had come to wear their feudal bonds lightly and their liege and sovereign lord, the Raja of Bikaner, was determined to put an end to this unsatisfactory state of affairs. He appointed Amar Chand to chastise the refractory vassals and teach them a lesson. Accordingly, during the next four years, Amar Chand remained engaged in this task. He was, to our mind, guilty of much unnecessary cruelty and bloodshed in the discharge of his duty. It is a strange irony of fate that it never occurred to him that the same fate which he meted out to his erring victims was in store for him He exacted a heavy fine from the Thakur of Saranbi. He, then, pounced upon Ratan Singh Baidvant and hanged him on the spot. He next sprang upon the Bhattis, numbering three hundred in their home, at Dherdan and butchered them all—only one man escaped with his life. Soon after, he attacked the leading

(1) Indraj was born at Sojat in A.D. 1767. He belonged to the Singhvi clan of the Oswals. He was the greatest general that the Oswals have ever produced. He not only successfully waged war against Bikaner but also humbled the pride of Jaipur. He was assassinated at Jodhpur in A.D. 1815.

Thakur chiefs, Nahar Singh and Puran Singh and having taken them prisoners sent them under custody to Bikaner where they were all executed.

Surat Singh greatly appreciated the services of Amar Chand and conferred on him the special honour of dining with him at his residence.

In A.D. 1815, Amar Chand was sent in command of an army against Sheo Singh, the Thakur of Churu. He laid siege of the town and cut off the supplies of the enemy. No longer able to stand the siege, the high-minded Thakur preferred a glorious death to an ignominious surrender. He committed suicide: and the place fell into the hands of the besiegers

These services of Amar Chand greatly pleased his master who conferred on him the title of Rao, a robe of honour, and an elephant to ride.

Amar Chand had a meteoric career. The star of his fortune that had attained its full lustre and brilliancy began to decline. His success excited the jealousy of his enemies. A conspiracy was formed to bring about his downfall. The conspirators not only succeeded in dragging him down from the high pedestal

which he had come to occupy in the state politics, but also made him pay a heavy fine for his supposed complicity in a criminal affair. In A.D 1817, he was falsely accused of intriguing with Amir Khan, the leader of the Pindaras. In spite of the efforts of his friends, his enemies won the day, and the innocent man was executed in a most brutal manner.

Bhama Sah, the Saviour of Mewar.

"The name of Bhama Sah," says Colonel Tod, "is preserved as the Saviour of Mewar." An Oswal by birth and a Jaina by religion, he was the perfect model of fidelity and devotion. He was the *diwan* of the illustrious Rana Pratap—an office which his family had held for several generations.

The invasion of Chittore by Akbar and the gallant defence of it by Pratap are facts well-known to every reader of Indian History. It is sufficient for our present purpose to mention that once Rana Pratap, on account of the want of funds, had been reduced to such a straitened condition that he resolved to abandon Mewar and emigrate to Sindh with all his family and followers who preferred exile to degradation. He descended the Arvali and had already reached the desert when the patriotic magnanimity of his minister made him change his resolution. Bhama placed at the disposal of his master all the riches and resources of his forefathers—which are stated to have been equivalent to the maintenance of twenty-five thousand men for twelve years—and requested him to return to his native soil and to renew the war against Akbar. The result was

that Rana Pratap in a short campagne regained the whole of Mewar except Chittore, Ajmer and Mandalgarh.

The name of Bhama Shah is a household word in Mewar, and he is still gratefully remembered as the Preserver of the Honour of his country.

Dumraj, the Governor of Ajmer.

Having re-conquered Ajmer from the Mahrattas in A.D. 1787, Maharaja Vijay Singh of Marwar sent Dumraj Singhvi, an Oswal by caste, as governor of the newly acquired place. The Mahrattas, however, soon recouped their losses and four years later again invaded the territory of Marwar. Two sanguinary battles of Mairta and Patan were fought in which the Marwaris were defeated.

In the meantime, the Mahratta general De Boigne had attacked and invested Ajmer Dumraj, the governor of the place, with his small garrison stood the siege heroically and successfully kept the besiegers at bay.

After the disastrous result of the battle of Patan, Vijay Singh issued orders to Dumraj to surrender the place to the besiegers and return to Jodhpur.

It was too exacting a demand on his brave and chivalrous nature. He would neither consent to a disgraceful surrender nor would he be guilty of disobedience to his master. He was thus placed in a dilemma, and as an escape out of it he courted death. He had a diamond ring

on his finger. He powdered the gem and swallowed it. "Go and tell the prince," cried the departing hero, "thus only I could testify my obedience; and over my dead body alone could a Mahratta enter Ajmer."

THE END.

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